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E X A M P L E S
OF THE
INTERPOSITION
OF
PROVIDENCE
IN THE
DETECTION and PUNISHMENT
OF
M U R D E R.

CONTAINING,

Above thirty Cases, in which this dreadful Crime
has been brought to Light, in the most extraor-
dinary and miraculous Manner ; collected from
various authors, antient and modern.

WITH AN
INTRODUCTION and CONCLUSION,

Both written

By HENRY FIELDING, Esq;

D U B L I N :

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TO THE
Right Rev. Father in God,
ISAAC
Lord Bishop of
WORCESTER.

My Lord,

IN a conversation to which I
had some time since the
honour to be admitted with
your Lordship, you was pleas-

A 2 ed

DEDICATION.

ed to lament, among other great and growing evils, the many flagrant instances of Murder that have lately alarmed the public. I then took occasion to mention the plan of such a book as I now present to your Lordship ; this immediately received your encouragement, and, I hope, will now receive your protection.

To give an attempt of this kind its full force, the sanction of some great name is necessary ;



DEDICATION.

fary ; and where, my Lord,
could I find one so proper, as
that of a prelate of so distin-
guished a character ; whose
zeal for the good of his coun-
try is so universally known and
acknowledged, and who hath,
with such vigour and success,
employed the most eminent
talents, and the most unwea-
ried industry, in the cause of
the publick.

To this consideration, my
Lord, I hope you will impute

DEDICATION.

my present desire of your
Lordship's patronage ; and
not to that pride which I shall
always have in telling the
world, that I am, with the
greatest respect,

my Lord,

your Lordship's

most obliged,

and most dutiful,

humble servant,

Bow-Street, April 8.
1752.



Henry Fielding.

EXAMPLES

OF THE

Interposition of PROVIDENCE in the Detection and Punish- ment of Murder.

THAT the most dreadful crime of Murder hath of late encreased in a very deplorable degree in this kingdom is a fact which every man must confess, and which every good man must very bitterly lament. Till this age, indeed, cruel and bloody actions were so seldom heard of in England, that when they happened, they appeared as prodigies, and raised not only the detestation, but the astonishment of the people. In all the arts of fraud, knavery, and theft, we have long since been equal to any of our neighbours ; but Murder is very lately begun, perhaps is even now beginning to be common among us.

In the politic, as in the natural body, no disorders ever spring up without a cause ; much less do any diseases become epidemical by mere accident. These must all have their causes, and such causes must be adequate to the effects which they produce.

For my part, I sincerely declare I can discover no more than one cause of the horrid

evil of which I am complaining: ONE indeed most perfectly adequate to the production of every political mischief; and which I am convinced hath more than all others, contributed to the production, and to the encrease of all those moral evils with which the public is at present so extremely afflicted.

My sensible reader will presently guess, that I mean that general neglect (I wish I could not say contempt) of religion, which hath within these few years so fatally overspread this whole nation; hath grown to be a kind of fashion among us, and like other fashions, having begun among the higher ranks of people, hath descended gradually through all orders, till it hath reached the very lowest in the society.

This is a matter too clear, I think, and too self-evident to require any proof: for when we reflect on those solemn denunciations, of the most grievous judgments against this crime by Almighty God, how is it possible to conceive that a creature who believes that this God is, and that these denunciations of vengeance came from him, should, unless he were a downright fool or madman, thus audaciously fly in the face of a being, in whose words we must be assured there is all truth, and in whose right hand is all power?

But besides the frequent declarations of God's most bitter wrath against this deadly sin in the Old Testament; besides the fearful and tremendous sentence of eternal punishment against it in the New Testament; the Almighty hath been pleased to distinguish the atrociousness of the Murderer's guilt, by levelling his thunder directly



directly at his head, in this world. The Divine providence hath been pleased to interpose in a more immediate manner in the detection of this crime than of any other. Of which interpositions not only the holy scriptures, but the histories and traditions of all ages, and of all countries, do give us many and unquestionable examples. To this truth, the horrors with which the minds of Murderers are particularly haunted ; and the most unaccountable, indeed miraculous means, by which the most secret and cunning Murders have often been detected, do abundantly bear testimony : not to mention the many stories of apparitions on this dreadful occasion ; some of which have been so well and faithfully attested, that to reject them with a hasty disbelief, seems to argue more of an obstinate and stubborn infidelity, than of a sound and sober reason.

Here then I shall present the reader, with a few examples of this immediate Interposition of the Divine providence on this occasion. To transcribe the whole, would fill a large volume ; and though perhaps, I may have omitted many more worthy of being asserted, than some of those which I have chosen, yet I trust, that what I shall here present the serious and attentive reader, will be sufficient to convince him of that awful truth, abovementioned ; of which, if we may venture to assert any thing on such a subject, the motive seems to have been to deter men, by such manifest preternatural interpositions of Divine providence, from the commission of this dreadful, this execrable, this unpardonable sin.

The first Murder we hear of, is in the sacred history. It is that committed by Cain on the body of his brother Abel.

In this we find the Almighty personally interposing, and calling the offender to the severest account. This was discovered by God himself, and how discovered? Why, as the sacred text tells us, by the "Crying of the blood of the slain for vengeance against the Murderer."

And this vengeance was accordingly executed by the all righteous judge, in a curse pronounced by himself against Cain; who, in pursuance of his sentence, wandered through the earth, groaning and trembling, according to the translation of the LXX. Haunted, says a commentator on Eusebius, with his brother's ghost whithersoever he went; for it was a notion which prevailed among the Jews, as well as all other nations, that the ghosts of those who were murdered, persecuted their Murderers, continually terrifying them, and requiring their punishment at the hands of Justice. And of the truth of this opinion, the most authentic histories, as well as the traditions of all ages and countries, afford us very positive assurance.

That Cain was not put to death by God for his offence, seems an instance rather of the Divine severity, than of any mercy intended towards him. The design was possibly to make him a living and lasting example of the Almighty wrath, against this heinous crime. Cain himself, when he cried out that his punishment was greater than he could bear, would have considered

dered death as a mitigation of his sentence. How much more dreadful indeed was the alternative of being banished from the face of God, of being driven as a vagabond and a runagate out of the holy land ; and being compelled to wander about with a mark of infamy, set by God's own hand upon him ; afraid of all whom he should meet ; haunted by his brother's incensed and injured spirit ; and much more haunted, perhaps, by his own conscience ; the ground, as the Jewish rabbies say, shaking under him, so that all who met him, ran away from him, crying, " This is the cruel man that killed his brother."

There is, perhaps, no truth whatever, which can be supported by so many authorities from history, as this of the divine vengeance against Murder. The example of Herod is extremely affecting to this purpose. ' The fate of Herod,' says Eusebius, ' is well worthy our consideration ; divine justice pursued him immediately after those cruel murders which he had committed ; and his sufferings in this life seemed to exhibit a kind of prelude of those torments which were prepared for him after his death. The former happiness of his reign was on a sudden obscured by a succession of the most terrible calamities, by the murders of his wife, his children, and of the nearest of his relations and friends. Josephus hath drawn the picture at length, and it surpasses all the tragical stories which poets have ever invented.' — He then relates from that historian the manner of Herod's death, which he says, was by a rod sent from heaven. By this the king was afflicted

afflicted with a disease of a very exemplary kind ; and which did manifest the immediate interposition of providence, as well by the singularity, as by the extremity of those excruciating torments, in which by a slow tedious wasting (being indeed devoured alive by vermin) he was dragged to his miserable end.

A like account the same historian gives us of the dreadful catastrophe of Maximinus, a great murderer of the christians, by the same extraordinary and miraculous means.

Indeed, not only the ecclesiastical writers, but prophane historians abundantly furnish us with examples of the wrath of God against the great tyrants and murderers of mankind, whose deaths have been, for the most part, as violent as their lives, and the former have been as wretched, as the latter detestable. Of this the latter part of the Roman history is almost one continued record. Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Vitellius, Domitian, Commodus, Caracalla, and Heliogabalus, were not greater instances of cruelty while they lived, than of misery when they died.

I will proceed to particular instances in which God hath been pleased to demonstrate his great abhorrence of this sin of Murder, by a supernatural and miraculous interposition of Providence, in the punishment, as well as detection, of this most abominable sin.

Of this sin, which is committed not only in defiance of the positive revealed laws of God, and all the punishments which in these laws are denounced against it ; but in manifest opposition to those secret institutions, which God hath
written

written in the heart and conscience of every man, where there is no principle so deeply engraved, none written in such legible characters as this divine Command, THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER.

EXAMPLE I.

We read in Plutarch, that a soldier of king Pyrrhus being slain, his faithful dog would by no means be inticed from the dead body ; and the king coming by, the dog fawn'd on him, as seeming to supplicate his vengeance on his master's murderers. The king thereupon ordered his whole army to march by in order before him, and as soon as the murderers appeared, the dog flew fiercely on them, and would have torn them in pieces, had he not been with-held. The two soldiers terrified with so uncommon an attack, together with the accusation, and so faithful a witness directed by heaven for their accuser, fell on their knees, and confess'd the fact, for which they were both immediately executed. [*Plutarch de ferâ naminis vind.*]

EXAMPLE II.

The same author relates a story of one Bessus, who having murdered his father, was so pursued with a guilty conscience, that he thought the swallows, when they chatter'd, were saying, " Bessus has kill'd his father." Whereupon, being unable to conceal his guilt, he confess'd the fact, and received condign punishment.

[*Plutarch's Morals, Solin.*]

Many have been the instances, where the murderer from the racking torments of his mind, hath been driven to distraction, and by that

that means, in his raving fits, hath confess'd his crime ; and tho' such a confession in sleep, or in madness, cannot well be deem'd sufficient evidence against a man, yet never was such confession made, but it either led so strongly to the finding circumstantial evidence of the fact, as was sufficient to convict the guilty person ; or else struck by the terror of a discovery being made, the murderer hath, when returned to his senses, confessed the fact : In both which cases is very plainly seen, the immediate interposition of Providence, in order to bring the offender to public justice, as may be illustrated also by the following facts.

EXAMPLE III.

Alphonso, of the city of Veruli was the only son of his mother Sophia, and knowing himself to be heir to her great jointure, when she died, he regarded not the precepts or examples of that excellent and wise lady his mother, but gave a loose to all his vicious inclinations, which gave the lady Sophia the greatest uneasiness imaginable.

Cassino, brother to Sophia, having lost his wife, intreated this his sister to take the care of his only daughter Eleonora, who was now fifteen years old ; and this charge Sophia performed so well, that when Eleanora became of the age of fourteen years, she was esteemed one of the best educated, as well as one of the most beautiful young ladies of that city.

Alphonso, charm'd with his cousin's beauty, but more with the great fortune to which she
was

was heiress, resolved to endeavour at gaining her ; but as this could not be done with the character he bore of extravagance and debauchery, he feign'd a most sudden and thorough reformation ; and though for some time his mother gave little credit to his sincerity, and could not be prevailed on to ask the alliance of her brother, yet, after seeing in her son a whole year's continuance in the most regular and decent course of life, she was induced from her maternal fondness, and hopes of the truth of this pretended reformation, to intercede with her brother Cassino, that a match might be made between Alphonso and Eleanora. But as Cassino had not the same motives for partiality to Alphonso as his mother had, he saw through his disguise, and absolutely refused his consent, and as his sister was still importunate with him to grant her request, he took his daughter home to his own house, and begged to be troubled no more about the matter. Alphonso soon returned to his old courses, and the good virtuous Sophia, though her grief was very great, to see her son such a reprobate, rejoiced that her intercession did not prevail to the ruin of her amiable niece. Alphonso in some time again wanted to renew his address to Eleanora, and asked his mother once more to propose it to her brother Cassino, but Sophia not only refused his request, but in pretty sharp terms, remonstrated against the debauchery of his life. So little was he moved with her discourse, that he now began to consider her as keeping him out of a large fortune by her life, and as being a disagreeable monitor, whose lectures

lectures were of force enough to make him feel the sting, from his riotous living, but not sufficient to make him forsake his excesses; he therefore, without the least gratitude for her repeated indulgences towards him, (for she had been the kindest of mothers) determined to free himself from her lectures, and to possess himself of her fortune. For this purpose he bought a quantity of poison, which he carried in his pocket, in order to wait for a convenient opportunity of giving it, which too soon offered; for in a few days, his mother was taken extremely ill as she was walking with her son and a maid servant, in her own garden, and leaning on her maid's arm, she begged her son to run in and fetch such a particular bottle, in which was a cordial, that was ordered her by a physician to take, whenever she was seized with these kind of complaints. Alphonso ran with all the haste of apparent filial duty and tenderness, but fraught with all the inhuman cruelty of a fiend; and bringing back the cordial into which he had conveyed the poison, his mother drank it down, and finding herself rather worse than better, she was put to bed, and in a few hours expired. Alphonso made so grand a funeral for his mother, and bewailed her in such pathetic terms, that no one in the least suspected her being poisoned, and her death was imputed to her sudden seizure in the garden. But it was not long before Alphonso again asked the consent of Cassino to marry his daughter, which being refused, he resolved (having hardened himself by one Murder) that Cassino should not live; and then

then he doubted not of carrying his point with Eleonora. One evening therefore in the dusk he rode to Cassino's house, tied his horse to the gate, and seeing Cassino walking in his garden, his usual custom in the evening, he with a carbine loaden with a brace of bullets shot him through the head ; when, instead of untying his horse and riding away, the vengeance of God followed him so as to turn his brain, and he ran into the next house, crying out he was very ill and must go to bed. The people of the house, out of compassion, took him in and put him to bed, sending, at the same time, for a physician, who found him perfectly delirious, raving and crying out that he had just shot Cassino, and a year before had poisoned his mother Sophia. By blisters and other applications his senses in a few hours returned to him, and being told what he had said in his raving fit, he with great confidence denied the truth of it, and said it would be unjust, as well as silly to believe a madman. But by this time the dead body of Cassino was found shot in his garden ; Alphonso's horse was found tied by the pallasadoes that looked into the garden, where Cassino lay dead, and a carbine that had been fired off was found by the bedside of Alphonso ; and which the people of the house, declared they saw him bring in with him in his hand. These circumstances were deemed sufficient to try and convict him, and he was executed for the murder of Cassino ; and on the scaffold again confessed the poisoning his mother Sophia.

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[God's Revenge, &c. p. 473.]

EXAMPLE IV.

Parthenius, treasurer to Theodobert king of France, having killed his dear friend Aufanius and his wife, of which he was never in the least suspected, detected himself, by crying out in his sleep for help against Aufanius and his wife, who he said, were dragging him to the great tribunal of God, to answer for his Murder. On this confession in his sleep, he was apprehended ; his restless conscience soon made him repeat and confirm such his confession, and he was accordingly condemned and executed.

[*Wanly's Wonders of the little World*, l. 1. c.

41. p. 89. *Beard's Theatre of Wonders*,
l. 2. ch. 10. p. 285.]

EXAMPLE V.

A soldier in colonel Venables regiment that came out of Ireland, looked melancholy and pin'd, and grew so pale and thin, that he was worn almost to a skeleton. His officer, thinking the poor fellow might have some cause for grief which it might be in his power to remove, kindly urged him to declare what it was that made him so wretched ; and at last, the soldier, unable longer to indure the racking torments of his own mind, made a confession to his captain, that he formerly had been a servant to a man that carried about stockings and such ware to sell ; and that for his money he had murdered his master, and buried him in such a place ; that he had immediately fled into Ireland, and insisted himself for a soldier ; that he had never enjoyed any happy hours,
but

but particularly from the time he had landed in England ; that he had every night been haunted with the ghost of his master ; who said to him, “ Wilt thou not yet confess thy wicked Murder.” He added, that he was now glad to suffer death at once, in order to avoid the lingering punishment of wasting by degrees under excessive tortures. He afterwards made a proper confession before a magistrate : the body was searched for and found, and the man was hanged in chains where the Murder was committed.

[*Baxter's Hist. Disc. of Apparitions*, p. 58.]

EXAMPLE VI.

A traveller was found murdered near Itzhow in Denmark ; and because the Murderer was unknown, the magistrates caused the hand of the slain to be cut off, and hung up by a string to the top of a room in the town-prison. Ten years after, the Murderer came into that room, having been taken up for some very slight offence, and the hand immediately began to drop blood upon the table that stood underneath it. The goaler on that, accused the prisoner with the murder, who struck with the apparent judgment of God, in the discovery of it, confessed the fact, and submitted to the punishment so justly due to his crime.

[*Turner* 28.] From *Beard's Theatre*. L. 2. c. 11.

EXAMPLE VII.

Smith and Gurney, two watermen of Gravesend, were hired by a graier to carry him down to Tilbury-Hope, for he intend-
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ed to buy cattle at a fair in Essex. These villains finding he had money, robbed him, and threw him over-board. This Murder was concealed many years ; at last, in the summer 1656. the two fellows, as they were drinking at an alehouse, had a quarrel, and Gurney in his passion, accused Smith with the Murder, which Smith soon retorted upon him. Being apprehended, and separately examined, they confessed the fact, were condemned at Maidstone assizes, and hanged in chains at Gravesend. [Turner 29.]

EXAMPLE VIII.

In the Northern part of England (I think in Lancashire : for I had the story from a clergyman of that country) the minister before he began to read prayers at church, saw a paper lying in his book, which he supposed to be the banns of marriage : He opened it, and saw written in a fair and distinct hand, words to the following purpose, “ That John P. and James D. had murdered a travelling man, had robbed him of his effects, and buried him in such an orchard.” The minister was extremely startled, and asked his clerk hastily, if he had placed any paper in the prayer-book. The clerk declared he had not ; but the minister prudently concealed the contents of the paper, for the two names therein contained were those of the clerk, and the sexton of the church.

The minister then went directly to a magistrate, told him what had happened, and took the paper out of his pocket to read it, when to his great surprize nothing appeared thereon,
but

but it was a plain piece of white paper ! The justice on that accused the minister of whim and fancy, and said that his head must certainly have been disordered, when he imagined such strange contents on a blank piece of paper. The good clergyman, plainly saw the hand of God in this matter, and by earnest intreaties, prevailed on the justice, to grant his warrant against the clerk and sexton ; who were taken up on suspicion, and separately confined and examined ; when so many contradictions appeared in their examination, for the sexton, who kept an ale-house, owned the having lodged such a man at his house, and the clerk said, he was that evening at the sexton's, but no such man was there, that it was thought proper to search their houses, in which were found several pieces of gold, and some goods belonging to men that travel the country ; yet they gave so tolerable an account of these, that no positive proof could be made out, till the clergyman, recollecting, that the paper mentioned the dead body to be buried in such an orchard, a circumstance which had before slipped his memory, the place was searched, and the body was found : on hearing which, the sexton confessed the fact, accusing the clerk as his accomplice, and they were both accordingly executed.

EXAMPLE IX.

At a country village called Sprease, in the Venetian territories, fifteen miles from the city of Brescia, lived a farmer whose name was Ali-bius, who in his youth married a country girl called Merilla, by whom he had one daughter. But when he was about fifty years old, he was
so

so displeased to find that his wife should also advance in years, and not continue in that youth and bloom in which she was when he married her, that he began to dislike and hate her : he left her, and went into a gentleman's service in Brescia, where after some years, he was made a mace-bearer to the chief magistrate, and by his outward behaviour acquired great reputation for an honest, sober and discreet man. At length a young widow called Philatea, to whom, by her husband, Alibius was left a trustee, favoured him so much, that he soon found his poor unhappy wife Merilla was the only obstacle to his enjoying both a fine young woman, and an ample fortune. He therefore, without the least remorse, resolved to dispatch her, and for that purpose bought some poison at Brescia, and riding to Sprease, he feigned great love and affection to his old wife Merilla, and treating her with milk and apples, he mixt in them some of the poison, enough as he imagined to destroy her, and the next morning early again returned to Brescia. Hearing no news of his wife's death, which he hourly expected from the doses he had given her, but which were only sufficient to make her extremely ill, but not to take away her life, he once more set out on the same design ; but finding his daughter there, he was afraid to repeat his potions, as she dwelt very strongly on her poor mother's late illness, and Alibius's conscience made him imagine, that she at least half intimated, that his milk and apples had been the occasion of her disorder. Yet did not these checks of conscience work strongly

strongly enough with him, to prevent his guilt and shameful exit, or to save a poor innocent woman from the cruelty of a man that ought to have been her protector. For in his third attempt, he came to Sprease in the middle of the night, and was let in by a little granddaughter about ten years old. He went directly into his wife's chamber, with another dose of poison, prepared for her, but finding her asleep, he with a billet out of the chimney, dashed out her brains, and riding back with all speed to Brescia, he appeared in his publick office by six of the clock in the morning, and no one suspected his having been out of the town. The poor child who let him in, knew him not, for he had never taken any notice either of her or her mother, since her marriage, and could give no other account, but that a ruffian had rushed into the house, and killed her grand-mother.

Alibius made great pretended lamentations for his wife, but soon after was married to the young and wealthy Philatea, and expected quietly to enjoy the fruits of his inhuman barbarity. But Providence designed otherwise, and he was made a public example of the folly, as well as wickedness, of expecting, that happiness will ever be the fruit of iniquity, or that so detestable a sin as Murder will go unpunished.

He had not lived long with his new wife, before an old companion of his coming to Brescia, in his drunken cups, declared, that Alibius and his daughter Amelia were the murderers of Merilla; and this report began to be

be current in the mouth of every one. On which the magistrates of the town of Brescia, who are extremely diligent in their offices, sent for Alibius, and examined him on this report, and sent also for the man who first set it on foot. Alibius boldly denied the fact, and the man declared he knew not what had induced him to utter such a scandal, which was only done in his liquor, for now being sober, he was far from accusing Alibius or his daughter, nor so much as remembered, his having done so when drunk. Although this affair seemed pretty well cleared up, yet one of the magistrates said, that since Merilla was certainly murdered, and as it could not be for her wealth, she being a very poor woman, he thought there needed a further examination, for as the old Proverb says, "there is no smoke without some fire," so is there seldom any report without some foundation for it. Alibius on this, thinking at once to exculpate himself, and shew his innocence, and depending on the fair character he had acquired, cried out, that nothing could be more true than what was last spoken; and then seeming to shed tears for the loss of his wife, he said, he owned that he himself had some suspicions of his daughter Amelia, but his tenderness as a father, had restrained him from seeking justice where it appeared due, for a murdered wife. This had the desired effect; every one praised both his speech and his conduct; and Amelia his daughter was immediately taken up, and adjudged to the rack. As poor Amelia was perfectly innocent, she was greatly shocked

shocked and astonished at the accusation. She bore the torment with patience and resignation, nor once reproached or complained of her cruel accusers.

Alibius, infatuated with his success, and urged on by his hatred to his daughter, depending also most cruelly and basely on her affection for him, urged them once more to put her to the torment; hoping, that by the grief of her mind, and pains of her body, she could not long survive her second tryal; when quite overcome with this repeated insult of inhumanity from her Father, she begged a patient hearing of the judge, and declared to him her suspicions of his being her mother's murderer, as also his former attempt to poison her with milk and apples. This was at first looked upon as a malicious retort, in hopes to save her own life; but luckily for her, the apothecary's servant who had sold the poison to Alibius, was then present; and recollecting the time, it exactly answered to Amelia's information. This man also declared, that he had sold Alibius another dose of poison, just about the time that Merilla was murdered; but as her death was from a blow, and as Alibius was not known to be absent that night from Brescia, there was no suspicion at that time in this man, but that the poison was, as he professed, bought to kill his rats. Another circumstance was now related, which concurred with the rest to prove his guilt; namely, that his horse, with the hard riding that night, had slipped his shoulder; which the farrier, who cured the beast declared in court. This farrier had before no suspicion from that circumstance

for Alibius had told the man, that he had lent his horse to a boy, who had, through the giddiness of youth, slipped his shoulder in riding, and the farrier never thought any more of the matter. These concurring circumstances, together with the evidence of the whole village of Sprease, to his ill treatment of his wife Merrill, and his neglect and hatred both of her and her daughter, were deemed sufficient to acquit Amelia; especially as her father, who was her only accuser, gave no reasons but his bare word for his suspicions. And it was thought proper immediately to put Alibius to the rack. He endured only one torment, before he confessed the whole truth, but declared his wife Philotea innocent of the knowledge. He was condemned, and accordingly executed in the 73d year of his age: a most miserable example of cruelty and hypocrisy; punished by the very means that he took, to add the death of an innocent daughter, to that of an injured wife.

[God's Revenge, p. 65.]

EXAMPLE X.

Victorina, a Venetian lady was married by her parents, not much with her own liking, to an old man; and soon after falling into the company of a gay young gentleman called Syponthus, she not only intrigued with him, but soon weary of the restraint of a husband's jealous eye, they agreed to murder the old gentleman. This wicked purpose Syponthus undertook, and executed in this manner. The old gentleman used to divert himself every evening in his gondola,

on the water. Syponthus leapt from his own boat well armed, into that of the old gentleman. He first dispatched him and then his two watermen, and threw them into the sea; and returning into his own boat, he stabbed his own waterman also, and threw him overboard. Having thus secured every witness to his guilt, by adding murder to murder, he landed after it was dark, and that night waited on the wicked contriver of all this mischief, and acquainted her with his success. They agreed not to see each other for some time, for fear of suspicion; and it was generally believed that the old gentleman was drowned. But in about eight days, his body was found by some fishermen; and as he plainly appeared to have been murdered, many were the conjectures, but no certainty could be obtained concerning the murderer. In a short time, a brother to the murdered old Gentleman came to Venice, and suspecting that his sister-in-law Victorina, bore no real affection to her deceased husband, and had been too familiar with Syponthus, he feared there had been foul play towards his poor brother. He therefore with large gifts prevailed on Victorina's maid Felicia, to declare what she knew of her lady's intrigues with Syponthus; and also to steal from her lady's cabinet a letter from Syponthus, in which he gave some distinct hints of the dangers he had run, and the acts he had performed for her sake. This letter being laid before a magistrate, he immediately took up Victorina and Syponthus, and separately confined them. Syponthus hearing that his accusation arose from a letter under his own

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hand,

hand, imagined that Victorina had accused and betrayed him, but finding means privately to correspond with her, and being assured of her innocence towards him, and that Felicia had stolen the letter and exposed it, he resolved at the expence of his own life to preserve hers; so great did the merit of her ill-placed affection to him appear in his eyes, that he considered not that he was preserving both a Murderer and adulteress, who was indeed only reserved for future punishment. Being put to the torture, he readily confessed the fact, but, at his execution, he with his dying breath declared Victorina ignorant of the knowledge of his crime, on which, at the earnest entreaty of her father, she was released.

Victorina soon forgot both her old husband, and her lover Syrontus, and was married, much against her father's consent, to a debauch'd profligate young Fellow, called Fassino, who soon repaid her for her disloyalty to her first husband, by leaving her for the company of the most abandon'd and profligate part of woman kind, on whom he lavish'd all his health and fortune; while he bestowed on his wife only diseases, ill humour, and distressed circumstances. She soon came to a thorough hatred of her husband, and having once stained her mind with Murder, she, without hesitation, determined to dispatch Fassino. She sent secretly for an Apothecary called Augustino, who lived in Naples, but at that time happened to be in Venice, and offer'd him a very large reward, if he would undertake to poison her husband Fassino. He not only refused the money, or to undertake the business,

business, but entreated her to lay aside such wicked purposes, and she appeared to be very much moved with his discourse, and promised to take his advice. Soon after he was departed from Venice, she privately bought some arsenic, and resolved to wait a convenient opportunity of giving it to her husband.

It was not long before Fassino came home from a debauch, very ill and desired to have some broth made for him. Victorina ordered her own maid Felicia to make the broth, and, whilst her back happened to be turned to the fire, Victorina slipped into the broth, as it was boiling, half the arsenic she had bought, and conveyed the other half privately into Felicia's trunk.

Victorina and the maid were both taken up, but it appeared so strong against Felicia, as the remainder of the poison was found in her trunk, that she was condemned to be hang'd; and as she did not, for she could not positively accuse her mistress, Victorina was again released, and exulted extremely in her double mischief, of getting rid of her husband, and being revenged on Felicia for what she had formerly done. But on the Day that Felicia was to be executed, after she was ascended on the scaffold, Augustino, the Neapolitan apothecary, landing at St. Mark's bridge, and seeing a great croud of people, enquired the occasion, and being told what it was, he hasten'd to the judges *Who are there present at such executions,* and begg'd them to delay, for a few minutes, the fate of the girl, 'till he had informed them of something that might save an innocent person, and bring the guilty to punishment. He

then acquainted them with what had formerly passed between himself and Victorina ; and, after they had thoroughly examined into the matter, Victorina was again taken up, and being confronted with Augustino the apothecary, she trembled, and was near fainting away. On the first mention of the rack she declared the whole truth, and confessed also the Murder of her former husband, and her intentions, so near succeeding, of taking away the life of Felicia. The whole court was shock'd with the blackness of her crimes. Felicia was released, and Victorina was executed with all the rigour of the law.

[God's Revenge, &c. p. 37.]

EXAMPLE XI.

In Metz, a city of Lorrain, lived a merchant who was very wealthy, but of a most covetous and cruel disposition. One of his servants having given him some slight offence, he beat him with his own hands, in so severe a manner that the poor lad expired at his feet ; yet, as there was no witness to this piece of cruelty, he for some time escaped punishment ; for, carrying down the dead body into the cellar, he there buried it himself, and, when the boy was missed, it was generally believed that he had run away from his master, and no further inquiry was made concerning him. In less than a year after this cruel murder had been committed, the executioner of the city stole one night into the merchant's house, and got privately down into the cellar, where he first slew the maid who was sent for some wine, and then her mistress, who came thither in order to see what was

was become of her maid. He then took off the lady's cloaths, and rifling them of all they had in their pockets, as also taking some pieces of plate from the sideboard, stole off unperceived by any one. The merchant, on his return home, finding the Murder of his wife and servant, and the plunder of the house, complained to the senate, and they promised to take all proper means to discover both the thief and the murderer; but it being well known, that the merchant had lived in a most brawling and unhappy manner with his wife, and had also been known to strike her, and use her with much cruelty, the man who really had committed the theft and murder, on that hint, whisper'd amongst the crowd, ' that 'twas ' very likely that the merchant himself, on finding his house robb'd, might take that opportunity to murder his wife, (and the maid too, ' perhaps, for helping her mistress) that by such ' means he might avoid the suspicion which must ' attend every cruel husband whose wife is found ' to have died by violence.' This rumour so strongly prevailed, that the merchant was taken up, and put to the rack. The torture was so great, that he soon cry'd out that he preferr'd death to such torments, and if they would release him, he would confess the truth. He then, being deeply struck in his conscience, own'd the murder of his servant, but strongly denied that of his wife and maid. They search'd the cellar, and found the dead body of the boy, and the merchant was accordingly executed for the same. But with his last breath he so strongly denied the murder of his wife and maid, that 'twas not doubted, but the thief who had plunder'd the house,

house, and the murderer was the same ; nor was it long before that wicked fellow the executioner, who had been the means of bringing the merchant to justice, was punish'd for his complicated crimes of theft, murder, and false accusation. For, wanting money, he pawn'd a silver bowl to a Jew, on which was the merchant's arms. The Jew took it, but carried it directly before a magistrate, who immediately seized on the executioner, search'd his house, where he found many more things belonging to the merchant ; as also the watch, and several baubles and trinkets, belonging to his wife, which must have been taken from her pocket when she was murdered. These proofs were so strong against him, both of the Murder and theft, that he was condemn'd and executed with all the rigor of the law.

[*Turner's Divine Judgments*, 30.]

EXAMPLE XII.

Some highwaymen in Germany, after having robb'd a gentleman in a wood, agreed to murder him, to prevent discovery. He begg'd hard for his life, but could not prevail ; and as they were endeavouring to cut his throat, seeing a flight of cranes over his head, he cried out, "O ye cranes, as you are the witnesses to my Murder I adjure ye to detect these Murderers, and bring them to justice."

Not long after, as these thieves and Murderers were drinking at an inn, and dividing their spoil, a great flight of cranes came, and settled on the house, and made a most dreadful noise and clamour ; on which they fell a laughing,

ing, and one said to the rest, "There are the
 "cranes come, to discover the murder of the
 "gentleman whom we killed in the wood, but
 "I believe no one will understand their language,
 "and they will lose their labour." A person
 overhearing this speech, and, from their lock-
 ing themselves into their room, suspecting they
 were not very honest men, went to a magistrate
 and got a warrant to take them up. On search-
 ing them, many things of value were found on
 them; and on taxing them with the Murder,
 (without telling them the grounds for such ac-
 cusation) they separately gave such contradictory
 answers, that the suspicion against them was
 strong enough to induce a narrow search.

The dead body was afterwards found; and,
 as the thieves in their hurry had taken but one
 of his shoe buckles, that which was found in
 the dead man's shoe was compared with the
 buckle found in the possession of the thieves.
 This circumstance was deemed strong enough
 to convict them both of the robbery and
 Murder, for which they were all three executed,
 and which, with many other things, they con-
 fess'd at the gallows.

[Wonders of the little World, l. i. c. 41.
 p. 90. *Beard's Theatre*, l. 2. c. 11. p. 299.]

E X A M P L E XIII.

Monfieur de Laurier, a very rich jeweller of the
 city of Dijon, in the province of Burgundy, had
 been at Francfort, where he had sold a consider-
 able quantity of goods, for which he received
 1700 crowns. Returning home with the afore-
 said

said sum, and also with the value of as much more in jewels, he was taken very ill at the town of Salines, and obliged to take up his lodging at an inn, the keeper of which was named Adrian, and his wife Isabella.

The jeweller's companions being men of business, and not related to him, left him, and his fever increased so much, that he gave himself over for a dead man, and sent for a physician of that place. The doctor attended him some time, but finding his patient at last on the mending hand, though not yet able to travel, he left off his visits. On his return after a few days absence, Adrian acquainted the physician, that Monsieur de Laurier was well, and set out for his own house at Dijon. But the truth was far otherwise; for this wicked host Adrian, imagining that De Laurier had great riches about him, resolved that he should not go alive from his house: he communicated his cruel purpose to his wife Isabella, who, with tears and prayers, besought him to lay aside his horrid design; but when he found she was not to be moved to be an assistant in his guilt, he sent her many leagues off, under pretence of visiting her aged father, who, he said, as he had heard, was very near his death. He after, one night, sent away both his man and maid-servant, on some pretence, and then, with another bloody-minded villain, to whom he promised half the booty, he strangled the old man in his bed, and buried his body in the orchard. In ten days his wife returned, and to her, as well as his servants, he declared that De Laurier had left his house; and as to his horse, Adrian's accomplice carried that into a wood, about four leagues from Salines, hoping

hoping that the beast would find his way to Dijon, and that De Laurier's son would suppose his father had been robb'd and murder'd on the road.

Just that day month, after the Murder had been committed, a wolf came into Adrian's orchard, and digging at the place where De Laurier was buried, tore up the carcase, and began to devour it; when some gentlemen with dogs, leaping the hedge, came into the same orchard, the wolf fled; but the gentlemen, seeing the body, had it taken up, and carried into the midst of the city, where many people came to look at it, and, amongst the rest, the physician La Motte, who knew it to be the face of De Laurier, whom he had attended at Adrian's house. The officers of justice immediately surrounded Adrian's house, and took up his servants, and his wife Isabella; but, for Adrian himself, he was that night rioting at the house of his wicked accomplice in the Murder; and on hearing the report that De Laurier's body was found, they both fled, hoping to escape out of the reach of that jurisdiction; but being fearful of appearing in daylight, they hid themselves in a large wood, about two leagues from Salines, and lying concealed all day, they only travelled after it was dark. After wandering the whole night, they constantly, as soon as it was day, found themselves on that side of the wood from whence they could see the city of Salines; and though they lay for nine days concealed, and for nine nights travelled with all the speed and care imaginable, yet never could they find themselves advanced beyond the same side of the wood at which they entered. Weakened with fasting and extreme hunger, they at last became so faint, that they were hardly able to support

port themselves any longer : By this time, De Laurier's son being come from Dijon, and having buried his father, was returning home, and in company with him was La Motte the physician. These two on break of day entered the wood, and there discovered Adrian and his companion, lying under the shade of a tree. They were at first afraid, being but two in number, to attack such desperate villains ; but more people coming up, they soon laid hands on the murderers, whom they found very little able to make resistance. They were first tortured, and afterwards executed for the inhospitable and cruel act.

[God's Revenge, &c. p. 369.]

E X A M P L E XIV.

Signior Thomasi Vituri, a nobleman of the city of Pavia, had one only daughter named Christinetta ; to whom most of the young gentlemen of that neighbourhood made their addresses. Amongst these was Signior Gasperino, a noble young gentleman of Cremona ; who desired his friend Lodovicus Pisani, to accompany him in his visits to Christinetta. But unhappily for him, Christinetta fell most desperately in love with Pisani, and therefore gave Gasperino an absolute refusal. As soon as Gasperino was departed, she by letter made Pisani acquainted with her passion, and he returning to Pavia, was, with the consent of her parents, married to her.

Gasperino thinking himself ill used by Pisani, sends him a challenge, which he accepts : They met, attended by seconds, and Pisani was killed ;
but

out as it was allowed to be a fair and honourable duel, Gasperino easily obtained his pardon.

Gasperino's passion for Christinetta was so great, that he again made his addressee to her, and she smothering her resentment for the death of her husband, gave him great encouragement; and one evening appointed to meet him, in a garden adjoining to the nun's garden, in Pavia. Hither we brought with her two ruffians, Brindoli and Bianco; who fell on Gasperino at his arrival, and although he for some time defended himself, the ruffians overpowered, and with repeated stabs slew him; and to prevent him from groaning, so as to be heard by the nuns, Christinetta herself stuffed her handkerchief into his mouth, and being dead, they carried his body to the other side of the garden, and threw it into a well.

The nuns hearing the clashing of swords, sent speedily to the place from whence the sound came, and though the murderers were fled, yet much blood remained in the place. Hence believing that there had been mischief, the nuns sent to all the surgeons in the city, to enquire what wounded persons they had under their care, and by that means they soon discovered Brindoli and Bianco to have been wounded that very evening. Gasperino also being missed, there was a strong suspicion that they were his murderers; but they firmly denied it, and declared, that they received their wounds from each other, having had a quarrel, which they decided by the sword.

Even the rack, which they both endured, could force no confession from them; and

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Christinetta,

Christinetta, hearing that they had suffered torments, without betraying her, greatly hoped and believed, that she should go unpunished to her grave.

But the magistrates being yet unsatisfied, in not hearing any news of Gasperino, and being informed by his servant, that he went out that evening towards the nun's garden, ordered a stricter search to be made for his body, which at length was found in the well ; but still they were at a loss for the murderers ; as neither by proof, or their own confession, could they convict Bianco or Brindoli of having been in his company : But on farther examining the dead body, they perceived the corner of a white handkerchief to hang out of the deceased's mouth ; and, pulling it from thence, they saw on one corner of it, the name of Christinetta. This was sufficient to have her taken up, and on the very first torment, she not only confessed the fact, but accused her two accomplices Bianco and Brindoli ; and they were all three publickly executed. The bodies of the two ruffians, after being hanged, were thrown into the river Po ; and the inhuman Christinetta, who with a pretence of kindness betrayed, and then assisted in the murder of Gasperino, was first hanged, then her body was burnt, and her ashes scattered into the air.

[God's Revenge, &c. p. 16.]

EXAMPLE XV.

In those countries abroad, where it is no uncommon thing to hire ruffians to kill for
 them,

them, there is one circumstance which shews the folly as well as wickedness of employing such bloody agents ; namely, that it never, or very seldom ever happened, but these men, either for their repeated villanies or some robbery come to publick execution, and then they surely publish every hired fact they were ever employed in. By which means, the principal mover of a Murder is daily at the mercy of the breath of a wretch whom he knows to be a villain and a murderer. Innumerable are the instances abroad of these kind of discoveries, among which is the following.

In a village, near the town of Sens in Burgundy, lived two brothers, the eldest was called Vimorie, and the name of the younger was Harcourt. Vimorie married a very plain woman called Masserina, for the sake of her wealth ; and Harcourt married for love a beautiful young girl, whose personal perfections were her only dowry. In less than a year, Harcourt growing weary of his amiable wife, began to wish that he had made wealth and not beauty his choice ; and being a wretch without natural affection to his brother, and possessing every ill quality that human nature is capable of, he determined, within himself, to rob his brother both of his fortune and his wife, and this in a way that the law could not possibly reach him. This was no other than by making use of the personal advantages in which he excelled in a very eminent degree, and of that rhetoric which he had from experience found was seldom ineffectual with women. Every art that could possibly be made use of for that pur-

pose he employed, and by these base means he prevailed with the unfortunate Masserina to forsake her husband, and to fly with him. She (being a widow when she married Vimorie) had her whole fortune in her own power; this she bestowed on Harcourt, and without the least shame or compunction, they lived publicly together at Genoa. Vimorie and the disconsolate wife of Harcourt seeing there was no redress, endeavoured to console themselves with their lot; which being innocence of mind, though devoid of affluence of fortune, was greatly preferable to the guilty hours of Harcourt and Masserina.

It was not long before a very large estate of inheritance came to Masserina by the death of her brother; but as she was absent, her injured husband, Vimorie, was soon put in possession of it by law.

Harcourt, by his riot and extravagance, soon spent all the fortune that Masserina had in her own power, and hearing of this large acquisition kept from him, as he called it, by his brother, he soon came to the bloody resolution of taking away his life. He first tampered with his own servant Noel, to undertake the murder of Vimorie; but, on his refusal, he put on a disguise, and going himself to the village where his brother lived, shot him in the dusk of the evening, as he was going into his own house, and then posted back with such speed to Geneva, that he was never missed, nor was the least suspicion cast on him for the murder. There was still one bar remained to his enjoyment of this fortune, which the fond deluded

deluded Mafferina wished to bestow on him by marriage, and that was the life of his own deserted wife: but as those who commit one cruel act, never hesitate at a second, he hires a mountebank, named Tivoly, to go to Sens. and there to poison her, which was soon effected; after which he and Mafferina both returned to Sens, were publicly married, and, for a short time, seemed to enjoy the highest worldly success from their most diabolical cruelty. But Tivoly the mountebank, being taken up and condemned for a robbery, he confessed the poisoning of Harcourt's wife, and declared himself hired by him and Mafferina to perform it. Noel also, Harcourt's man, being ill of a fever, declared (thinking himself on his death-bed) the offer of money his master had made him to murder his brother Vimorie. These two accusations, and other circumstances considered, Harcourt and Mafferina were taken up and put to the torture, where they soon confessed the crimes for which they were both publicly executed.

[God's Rev. &c. p. 325.]

EXAMPLE XVI.

Signior Albemare, a young gentleman of Millan, courted a beautiful young lady called Clara. He had obtain'd her parents consent, but could not gain hers, as she frankly told him, that her heart and honour were both engaged to signior Baretano. After a fruitless attendance on Clara for six months, he found her so fixed in her affection to Baretano, that he could

have no hope, but in the death of his rival. This he soon effected, by hiring two ruffians, Leonardo and Pedro, to murder him, for which he gave them two hundred ducats; and taking care himself to be far from Milan when this cruel murder was committed, he escaped suspicion, nor could the magistrates, at that time, gain the least insight into this bloody business.

After a year's lamentation for the death of her beloved Baretano, Clara consented to marry Albemare. But it was not long before he grew tired of this jewel, for which he had paid so large a price *as his own eternal damnation*; and he returned to his old way of living, which was associating with the most debauched and profligate part of the human kind. Pedro, one of his wicked agents in the Murder of Baretano, having lavish'd away all the money he had earn'd by his villainy, had recourse to a robbery, for which he was taken. Whilst in prison, he wrote in a letter to Albemare that if he did not procure for him his pardon for this robbery, he would at the gallows confess the Murder of Baretano, and also at whose instigation it was committed. Albemare return'd him a civil answer, and promised to grant his request, and the next night sent his own servant Valerio to him, to acquaint him, that his pardon was obtained, and would be sent him the next morning. But this was no other than a falsehood, invented for the present to stop his mouth, 'till he could effectually prevent his discovery of the Murder. This he did by giving him poison in a bottle of wine, which his servant carried to him in prison, for that purpose; and the next morning Pedro be-
ing

being found dead in his bed, 'twas supposed that he had poison'd himself to prevent his public execution.

Not long after, Leonardo, the other assassin who was at Pavia, wrote a letter to Albemare, saying he was very poor, and begging him to give, or lend him fifty ducats. Albemare took no notice of this letter, on which Leonardo, very much enraged wrote him a second, and said, that he would full as soon be hang'd as starv'd; and therefore if Albemare would not supply him with money to support him in a comfortable way of life, he would confess the murder of Baretano, and impeach him. This letter came when Albemare was abroad, and his servant Valerio being obliged to go out, laid it on a cupboard in his master's room, in order to be in his sight as soon as he came in. But a natural fool that Albemare kept in his house, seeing where the letter was put, climb'd up upon a stool, took it down, and ran with it into the court yard, jumping about, and crying out, *that God almighty had sent him a letter.* Clara at that time, coming in from church, and seeing the fool with this letter took it out of his hand, and observing 'twas directed to her husband, put it in her pocket, in order to give him when he came home, and ask'd his servant, (who was just return'd) from whence it came, to which the servant answer'd, he could not tell; but the fool following Clara, kept crying out, the letter is from God Almighty, I tell you it is God's own letter to me and not my Master Albemare. The strangeness of the idiot's words, and his urgency in repeating them,
gave

gave Clara so strong a curiosity to open the letter, that she could not resist; when, seeing the contents, she was, for some time like one turned into a stone with horror, nor knew which way to act, for she was extremely shock'd at the thought of being her husband's accuser. But the knowledge of a Murder bore too near a resemblance to the having committed one, for an honest mind to undergo, and reflecting also on the speech of the idiot, *no doubt divinely dictated*, she consider'd herself as bound in duty to God and her conscience, to discover all she knew. She gave the letter, therefore, into the hands of a magistrate, relating the manner in which she came by it. Upon this her husband Albemare was taken up, Leonardo also was brought from Pavia, and seeing his own letter, he soon confessed the fact, and accused Albemare of hiring him to undertake it. They were both accordingly executed for the same. Leonardo died penitent, but Albemare impiously cursed both his wife, the fool and his servant Valerio, whom he accused of being his instrument to poison Pedro, in prison, the night before his intended execution. Valerio, also, on that, was arraigned, and condemn'd to the rack, where he soon confessed the fact, but declared his innocence with regard to the Murder of Baretano. Leonardo and Valerio were both gibbeted, and the body of Albemare, after being hanged, was burnt, and his ashes thrown into the air.

[God's Revenge against Murder p. 213.]

EXAMPLE XVII.

Laurietta, a beautiful young heiress, of Avignon in France, was of so dissolute and debauch'd a mind, that although she had youth, beauty, and fortune sufficient to have match'd her with a man of the first rank and fortune in the kingdom, yet she gave herself up to all manner of extravagance and wantonness, and led the life of a common courtesan. One of her chief favourites was count Poligny, a very brave and worthy young gentleman, but who, for the fault of incontinency with this fair seducer, lost his life in the flower of his youth, for he was stabb'd one evening as he went from her apartment. The person suspected of this cruel action, was Monsieur de Belvile, a young gentleman who had been greatly favoured by Laurietta ; but was discarded when she received into her service the unhappy Poligny.

As no proofs appeared to justify the suspicion of Belvile's being the Murderer of Poligny, he was never openly accused of it, but Laurietta believing in her own mind, that it was Belvile who had deprived her of her favourite lover, resolved to be revenged on him, and for that purpose sent him a kind letter, wondering it had been so long since she had been blest with his company.

Belvile, with all the ardor of a lover, answered her epistle, and appointed the next evening to wait on her at her own house. She prepared herself, and maid-servant Lucetta, with poignards, hid under their garments, ready to receive him, but he saved them that trouble

ble by bringing with him a brace of pistols, which they, as in play, took out of his hands, and Laurietta, after many feigned caresses, of welcome, desired him to look out at the window, at something she pretended to shew him, and then fired a brace of Balls directly through his back. He fell dead at her feet, but yet she could not refrain from giving him several stabs with her poignard, and she and Lucetta carried down the body into the Cellar and buried it under a heap of billets.

On Belville's being missed, his valet declared, that he attended him to the lady Laurietta's gate, and saw him enter there, on which she was strictly examined, and she confess'd that Belville had made her a visit, but that his stay was extremely short, nor did she know what was become of him. Although no positive proof could be brought against her, yet they thought proper to give her the torment, but no confession did they force from her lips. Her maid Lucetta on hearing that her mistress was put to the torture, fear'd that she would confess, and betray her, and therefore fled; but in passing the fenny lakes that are between Avignon and Orange, she was drown'd. The flight of Lucetta made them more strongly suspect Laurietta, and they again gave her the torture, which she endured in the same manner as the first. On which they intended in a week's time to release her, and she shewed the highest marks of joy on the thought of her enlargement. But her wickedness was not, even in this world, to escape unpunish'd.

She was of a most extravagant temper, and had well nigh lavish'd away her whole fortune
on

on her licentious pleasures. She lived in a large hired house, in the finest street in Avignon, but, for the last three years, had paid no rent. Her landlord, Monsieur de Richcourt, willing to secure his money, seized for his rent, and sold not only the furniture, but even all the liquor in the cellar, and the very fuel which was left in the house ; and, on removing the billets, which he had sold, they found the earth under them had been newly dug up, and, on further search, they found the dead body of Belville. This put the matter quite out of doubt, and, on the day that Laurietta expected to have been released, they brought the mangled corpse of Belville into the prison to her, the sight of which had a stronger effect than all their torments, and she immediately fell on her knees, and confessed the fact ; which was indeed too plain to be denied, and she was executed for the same before the gates of her own house. She was first hanged, and then her body was burnt, together with that of her maid Lucetta, which was consumed by the same fire, and their mingled ashes were scatter'd into the air.

[God's Revenge, &c. 127.]

E X A M P L E XVIII.

A man was taken up on suspicion of Murder, but when brought to the bar, the evidence appeared not strong enough to convict him. He behaved with great apparent boldness, for he knew there were no witnesses to the fact ; and he had also taken all necessary caution to prevent a discovery. But the judge observed in the man's countenance a terror and confusion, which

which his pretended boldness could not hide, and therefore kept his eye steadily fixt on him the whole time. As soon as the last witness was dismissed, the man asked, if they had any more evidence against him; when the judge, looking sternly at him, asked him, if he did not himself know of one more that could appear against him, whose presence would put the matter out of doubt. On which the man started and cried out, "My lord, he is not a legal witness, no man can speak in his own cause, nor was the wound I gave him half so large, as what he shews against me." The judge presently perceived by the man's starting, and the wildness and terror of his look, that he either saw the ghost of the murdered man, or that his imagination had, from his guilty conscience, formed such an appearance; and therefore making the proper answers from such a supposition, he soon brought the murderer to confess the fact, for which he was condemned, and hanged in chains, at the place where he declared the murder was committed. At his death he averred, that the ghost of the murdered person had appeared before his eyes at his trial. [*Moretus*, p. 101.]

E X A M P L E XIX.

A gentleman in good circumstances, about the year 1640, murdered his friend, a man in business, near Bow-church in Cheapside; and with such circumstances of malice, revenge and cruelty, as made it impossible for him to expect any mercy. He therefore made his escape into France,

France, where he lived for some years : But from the horrors of his guilty conscience, which almost every night presented before his eyes, whether sleeping or waking, his murdered friend, he felt ten-fold the punishment, which, by flight, he vainly hoped to escape. After twenty years residence, or rather wandering abroad, through most parts of Europe, he resolved to venture back into England. He changed his name ; and as time, and the change of climates had altered his person, he doubted not but he might, in some retired part of his own country, wear out the remainder of his days ; and, perhaps, recover that peace of mind, which he had there left behind him. But publick justice, tho' slow, at last overtook him : For the very evening that he landed in a wherry at Queen hithe-stairs, walking up to Cheapside, in order to get into a coach, just in the dusk, and by the very door of his murdered friend, he heard a voice cry out, " Stop him, " stop him, there he is." On this he ran as fast as he was able, and soon found himself followed by a large mob. He was soon overtaken and seized, on which he cried out, " I confess " the fact, I am the man that did it." The mob on that said, as he had confessed the crime, they would proceed to execution ; and, after making him refund the stolen goods, would give him the discipline of pumping, kennelling and the like : on which he said he had stolen nothing, for though he had murdered Mr. L--- yet he had no intention of robbing his house. By this answer, the mob found themselves mistaken, for they were pursuing a pickpocket,

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and

and seeing this man run hard, believed him to be the pickpocket ; but now were for letting him go as a person distracted, that knew not what he said. One man however who lived in that neighbourhood, and had heard of the murder of Mr. L----, desired that this gentleman might be examined before a magistrate, and he was accordingly carried before the Lord-Mayor, who took his confession of the fact, for which he was soon after hanged : And he declared at the gallows, that the day of his execution was the happiest day he had known since he had committed that horrid, treacherous, inhuman act, the murder of a friend who loved him, and to whom he lay under the highest obligations.

[*Moretus's Secrets of the invisible world disclosed.* p. 105.]

E X A M P L E XX.

In the reign of king James I. one Ann Waters having an unlawful and wanton intercourse with a young man in the neighbourhood ; and finding her husband some embarrassment to their wicked pleasures, determined to put him out of the way ; and accordingly one night, assisted by her paramour, she strangled her husband, and they buried his body under a dung-hill in the cow-house. The man was missing, and his wife made such a lamentation about him, that the people greatly pitied her, and gave her all the assistance in their power in searching for her husband ; but as she knew where she had laid him, she took care to direct
their

their search far from the place where her barbarity would have been discovered.

After the search was at an end, and 'twas imagined, that the man might be gone away for debt, without acquainting his wife with his intentions; a woman in the neighbourhood dreamt that a stranger told her, that Ann Waters had strangled her husband, and hid him under the dunghill. She at first disregarded the dream, but it being repeated several nights, it began publickly to be talked of; and at length they got authority to search the dunghill, where the dead body was found; and other concurrent circumstances appearing, the wife was apprehended and convicted of the murder, which before her execution she confessed, and impeached the young fellow her accomplice: He, on her being apprehended, immediately fled, but was pursued and taken, and on his own confession was also executed for the murder. Ann Waters was burnt, and her paramour was hang'd in chains.

[Turner 29. *Wanley's wonders*, &c. l. 1. c. 41. p. 90. *Baker's Chron.* p. 614.]

E X A M P L E XXI.

In Leicestershire, not far from Lutterworth, a miller had murdered a man in his mill, and privately buried him in his garden; and soon after leaving the place, he settled in a county far off, and lived a long time, believing that his villainy would never be discovered. But after twenty years, he returned to visit some friends in the village where he formerly lived; and just

at that time, the miller who had the mill, having occasion to dig deep in his garden, found the body, or rather bones, of the murdered man. The neighbours then recollected that about twenty years ago, a man had been missing in the parish, and was never heard of after; some likewise recollected who was then possessor of the mill; and that very miller being now in the parish, they ran to the house where he was, and surrounding it, unanimously called on him as the murderer of that man. The miller was so shocked with the sudden and general accusation, and so stung in conscience for the crime, that he soon confessed the fact, and was accordingly executed.

[*Wanley's Wonders, &c. l. 1. 2. 41. p. 90.*

Beard's Theatre, &c. l. 2. c. 11. p. 299.]

E X A M P L E XXII.

In the year 1690. a man in Ireland dreamed that he was riding out with a relation of his, who lived at Amesbury in Wiltshire, on the downs near that town; and that his relation was robbed and murdered by two men, whose persons and dress he perfectly remembered. His dream was so strong, that he wrote to his cousin at Amesbury, begging him not to ride late, and then related the dream he had had concerning him. The man received the letter, but laughed at the caution; and the next night, on the very spot therein mentioned, he was both robbed and murdered. His wife, extremely afflicted for his loss, shewed this letter to her friends, and from the exact description of the murderers

murderers they were taken up, separately confined, and by their equivocal and contradictory answers, some of the murdered man's things being also found upon them, they were convicted, and hanged in chains on the spot where the murder was committed. [Turner, p. 54.]

EXAMPLE XXIII.

In the same year, in the month of April, William Barwick, who lived near York, murdered his wife, by drowning her in a pond, and buried her body in a bank covered by a quickset hedge, near to the pond.

He gave it out amongst his neighbours, that his wife was gone to Selby, to an uncle, who had sent to her, in order to make her his heir. A month after, one John Lotherhouse, whose wife was sister to the deceased, having occasion to water the quickset hedge before-mentioned, saw a woman pass hastily from the pond to the hedge, and then disappear. He thought it looked very like Barwick's wife, but believing her far off, he thought no more of the matter. The next day going to the same place, he again saw the same apparition walk from the pond to the hedge, and then he saw her sit down on the bank, and plainly perceived it to be the face of his wife's sister, but looking much paler than she used to do. He ran home in a great fright, and told his wife what he had seen, who advised him to declare it to the minister of the parish. He did so, and the minister bid him be for some time very secret, till he had sent to Selby, to enquire if Barwick's wife was at the place, to

which he pretended he had sent her. But finding neither any news of the woman, or any such uncle as her husband had talked of, Barwick was immediately taken up, and, being stung in conscience, confessed the fact. He was condemned at York assizes the September following, by judge Powel, and was hanged in chains. [*Turner*, p. 31.]

E X A M P L E XXIV.

Two Arcadians, of intimate acquaintance, lodged at Mægara. One at a friend's house, the other at an inn. He that lodged with his friend saw, in his sleep, his companion supplicating his host not to kill him; and heard his voice begging him to come to his assistance. Suddenly awaking, he started from his bed, and was hastily running out of the room; but recollecting his senses, he found he had only been in a dream, he therefore returned to his bed, and composed himself again to sleep. His friend again appeared to him with several wounds in his body, and said, "Since you could not prevent my murder, yet I conjure you to revenge it. My host has killed me, and has laid my body at the bottom of a dung-cart, and is now carrying it out of the west gate of the city." The man, at this, suddenly awaked again, and putting on his clothes, ran hastily to the western gate, where he overtook the cart, and under a heap of dung, found the mangled body of his murdered friend. The inn-

inn-keeper was seized, and suffered the punishment he so well deserved.

[*Turner*, 49. *Valer. Maxim.* 1. c. 7. *Dr. More Immort.* of the soul. 1. 2. c. 16.]

EXAMPLE XXV.

It is very common abroad, when a murder has been committed, for the survivors, if there are any, to describe the face and person of the murderer to some painter, who having drawn the likeness, prints are taken of it, and dispersed about, whereby many a murder has been discovered. One very remarkable instance happened of a discovery from these prints, where a common thief who had been guilty of many robberies, and some murders, had clapped a patch over one of his eyes, by which he designed to mislead any description that might be given of him in case he should be observed. His plot took, a print of him was published, as having been guilty of a most cruel and inhuman murder, and, as he thought himself safe by this stratagem, he bought one of the prints, carried it about with him, declared his great zeal to find out the murderer, and with much earnestness bid every one remark, that the villain had but one eye. His noisy assiduity was observed by a sagacious person, who suspected there was something more than common in his behaviour; the gentleman therefore begged, that this voluntary avenger of murder, might be taken up, and the person who had described the murderer sent for to look at him. It was a maid-servant to the murdered lady, who had recovered

recovered it, although she was also left for dead when the house was robbed. She immediately said, that the accused person was not the man, for the villain had but one eye. The gentleman then asked her, in what manner his eye seemed lost, whether it was sunk in his head, or appeared dead and wanting sight; the maid answered, that it was covered with a black patch, and she therefore could not answer his question. The gentleman immediately ordered a black patch to be put over the eye of the suspected man; when the maid positively swore to him, and he was executed, confessing, when on the rack, that he was guilty of the crime.

E X A M P L E XXVI.

In the west of England a man had been murdered, but four years had passed, and the murderer had not been discovered. In a large company of men met together at an ordinary, one of them looking earnestly at a grazier, cry'd out, "You are the man, sir, that four years ago killed farmer W----." The grazier turned as pale as death, and staggered so, that he was forced to sit down in a chair. The company gathered round him, and asked him, if the accusation was just. He fell on his knees, and, with great contrition and tears, confessed the fact, and was condemned and executed for the same. The person who taxed the grazier with the murder, being asked on what foundation he had accused him, declared, that it was no other than a strong and sudden impulse, which he could

could not resist, although his life might have paid the forfeit for his speech.

This Story was given me by a reverend clergyman of Wiltshire.

E X A M P L E XXVII.

A gentleman of high rank and fortune abroad, had invited several officers to dine with him, (amongst which was the father of the gentleman who told me the story) and just as they set down to the table, one of the officers looking up, cry'd out " Good God ! I am a dead man, " take her away, for pity's sake take her away, " for I cannot bear that look." And immediately he fell from his chair in a fit upon the floor. They gave him all proper assistance, and recovered him enough to place him again on his seat ; when looking to the same side of the room, he again cried out, " there she is " still, take her away, or I shall confess all, " and suffer the punishment I so well deserve." He then fell into a stronger fit than before ; and the gentleman of the house having great compassion for the poor man, and thinking he was seized with a frenzy fever, ordered him to be carried up stairs, and put to bed, and sent to the next town, which was six miles off, for a surgeon to let him blood.

One of the company observing that his agonies came on by his looking up at a picture which hung in the room, asked the gentleman of the house, whose picture it was ; to which he answered, that it was the picture of a young lady, who about two years before had been found murdered in her bed, and her house robbed

robbed of all the most valuable effects in it; that there never had yet been the least trace to find out the murderer; that all the remainder of her furniture had been publickly sold, and that he had bought that portrait as being well drawn, and the representation of a fine woman. The gentleman of the house then asked the other officers, what they knew of the man who was gone to bed in a fit, for he had only invited him out of civility to the rest of the gentlemen of the regiment. They declared they knew nothing of his family, but that he had lately bought a pair of colours.

As soon as the surgeon arrived, he bled the sick man, who again came to his senses; and being asked what had given him so much uneasiness, he looked wildly, would give no answer, and only muttered that he was subject to such fits; but looking up earnestly in the surgeon's face, he seemed in great confusion, and they apprehended was again falling into a fit. The gentleman of the house taking the surgeon apart, asked him, if he knew the person he had bled. The surgeon answered, that he believed he did not know him, for he heard he was an officer in the army; whereas he should otherwise have taken him for a strolling, idle fellow that he once remembered to have seen, who was not likely, either by his birth or fortune, to bear the king's commission. The gentleman desired the surgeon to go to him again, and to accost him by the name of that vagabond, to see what effect it would have on him, and if it was a mistake, 'twas easy to ask his pardon, and it would soon be made up.

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The surgeon returning into the room, came familiarly up to the officer, who was still in bed, took him by the hand and said, "How is it, Pedro? I little thought to have seen you here, nor knew you just now while you was in your fit." On which he cry'd out, "Well, since I find I am discovered, I will confess all, if you will not let me look on that face in the parlour any more." He accordingly, before the gentleman of the house, made a full confession of his having entered the house of the lady, whose picture had so terrified him, and by the help of one of her servants, whom he killed and buried in the cellar, and who, it was supposed, was fled for the robbery and murder, had rifled the house, and murdered the lady. That he found five hundred pound in gold in her bureau, with which he equipped himself for the army; but all her jewels, plate, &c. he had buried, for fear of a discovery, in a place where, by his direction, they were all found; as were also the bones of the murdered servant in the cellar. He was accordingly executed for the same.

E X A M P L E XXVIII.

In the north of France, a most barbarous and cruel murder had been committed on a young gentleman of fortune; and, with all the care and vigilance of the magistrates, not the least trace of the Murderer could be found. Seven years after this had happened, there was a current report all over the town where he had lived, that now the Murderer of this young gentleman
was

was found, for it was Monsieur De ----- that had done it, who was his most intimate friend, and lived, at that time, in great credit and reputation in the town. After this report had prevailed one whole day, it began to be wondered at, that Monsieur De ----- was not taken up, and on that, by endeavouring to trace the foundation of such an accusation, 'twas found to be only a general rumor, and no one could be fix'd on as the first inventor; on which the report soon died, and every one wished to find the author of so base a calumny.

Just that day twelvemonth the same rumor again prevailed all over the town, with this addition, that Monsieur De ----- had confessed the fact, and had shewn to the magistrates a place in his garden where he had buried, in a box, the hanger with which he had kill'd his friend, and all his own bloody cloaths in which he had committed the Murder. This report made a crowd gather about the gentleman's house, saying, they would come in to look at things that had been discovered in the garden. The gentleman, seeing a mob at his door, asked from his window the cause of the riot, and hearing what they said, with many imprecations also on him for his cruelty, and some sticks and stones flung at his head, he really believed himself discovered, and slipping down a pair of back stairs, he hastened to his stable, which was behind the house, took his best horse, and fled as fast as possible to get out of the French territories. The magistrates of the town, knowing the report of the gentleman's confession to be false, sent proper officers to
quiet

quiet and disperse the mob, and to prevent the gentleman from being kill'd by their ill founded rage. But on finding he was privately fled they began to reflect seriously on the matter, and to think that this strange rumor, the author of which again could not be found, was sent by Providence to detect this Murder; they therefore order'd some men to dig in the garden, in the spot where the bloody cloaths, &c. were reported to be hid, and there they found all the things which had before been described, and tho' they had been buried eight years, the blood was as fresh on them as ever. Messengers were immediately sent in pursuit of Monsieur De----- whom they overtook about two leagues from the city, for his horse having thrown him, he was lying on the ground, with his leg broke short off. As soon as he was brought back, he presently confessed the fact and was executed accordingly.

The two last preceding stories were told me by a gentleman whose father was an officer in the Irish regiments, in the French service, and who, he said was an eye-witness to the former; and had the relation of the latter from a French officer whom he knew to be a man of great honour and varacity.

E X A M P L E XXIX.

In the year 1611, Sir Thomas Glover then being our ambassador at Constantinople, some of his servants were one day diverting themselves with throwing snow-balls, when one of the ambassador's servants threw a ball, which

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hit a Turk such a blow on the eye, that it struck him instantly dead.

The aga of the janisaries complain'd to the grand visier and the grand visier demanded the servant of the ambassador to be given up to publick justice.

It was in vain that the ambassador urged that the blow was given by accident, and not by design; for the grand visier insisted he would have blood for blood, which is a law never dispensed with amongst the Turks. The ambassador then declared, that he knew not which of his servants to deliver up, for he could not discover by whose hand the ball had been thrown; but to prevent a tumult which seemed beginning to arise, (and the end of which might have reach'd even to the throne) he order'd all his servants to appear, and promised to give up the man that should be pronounced guilty. Five or six Turks instantly seized on one Simon Dibbins, a man newly come from Candia, and the rest of the janisaries, with one voice, declared him to be the guilty man.

The ambassador, knowing this man to have been absent from the place when the snow-ball was thrown, again protested with great vehemence against his execution: but finding that neither intreaties nor great sums of money which were offered, could prevail for his enlargement, after they had once seized on him, he thought it was better that one man (innocent as he thought him) should suffer, than by any farther opposition, to run the risque of losing many lives by a general insurrection.

The day of his execution being fixed, the ambassador sent his chaplain to him in prison, and
Dibbins

Dibbins then confessed, that he had, some years before, killed a man in England, and, for fear of detection, had fled to Candia; but, he said, he was now convinced, that the general outcry against him was the voice of God, by that means to bring him to justice, for a most bloody and premeditated Murder.

He was accordingly executed before the gate of the ambassador's house, who, from the account given by his chaplain, was very well satisfied to find, that, by the death of Dibbins, a Murderer was punished, and an innocent man who was only the accidental cause of a Turk's death, was saved from a sentence which would have been as hard on him, as it was just on the wretch who suffer'd no more than he really deserved.

[*Knowle's Turkish History, p. 134.*]

E X A M P L E XXX.

The following fact was told me by a gentleman whose great-grand-father was an Irish judge, and before whom the thing happen'd. The particulars have been preserved in the family by tradition ever since, but the name of the person that was executed is purposely omitted, as being of no inconsiderable family in that nation.

A gentleman was tried in Ireland for killing his friend in a duel, and the circumstances appearing very favourable on his side, the verdict was brought in man-slaughter. This crime being within benefit of clergy, the prisoner had the book offered him to read; on which he

started and hesitated in such a manner, that those who stood near him asked him why he did not proceed. He answered he could not see the words they were so stained with blood. He added, that he wonder'd they should use him in such a manner, and desired they would give him a fair book. Several people standing by look'd on the book, and all declared, that not the least drop of blood appear'd on it, but the words were perfectly legible. The prisoner, on that, fetch'd a deep sigh, and said, "I plainly perceive the vengeance of God is pursuing me; for although I declare myself innocent of the death of my friend, any otherwise than by being forced into it for self-defence, yet I confess myself worthy of public punishment; for some years ago I barbarously murdered my own father."

He then related all the particulars of the Murder, and his confession was so full, that he must have been condemn'd on that account, had he taken his tryal: but his incapacity for reading in any book they offered him, by the appearance of blood before his eyes, still continuing, no other tryal was necessary, and he was executed by his first conviction.

He died very penitent, persisting in his confession of the Murder of his father, allowing the justice of his punishment, and acknowledging the hand of God, in forcing him to a confession of his horrid crime.

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EXAMPLE XXXI.

I cannot omit a very extraordinary instance of the power of imagination in a guilty conscience, shewn at the tryal of Catharine Hayes, which was told me by a person of high rank and character, who was present at her tryal.

Catherine Hayes, near thirty years ago, was tried, convicted, and burnt, for the Murder of her husband, which (assisted by her own son and some others) she effected by cutting off his head, and throwing it into a river. On examining the evidence against her, there was a coat produced in court that formerly belonged to her husband, and had been given by her as part of the reward, to one of her wicked accomplices in the Murder. This coat was held up in order to be view'd, and, by the manner of its being lifted up, (the under parts of the skirts being hid by the crowd) its appearance was very much like that of a man without his head. This struck such a horror into the heart of the prisoner at the bar, especially as it was the very coat of her husband, that she fell dead upon the floor, and though she afterwards returned to life, yet she made no farther defence, but hung her head, and sullenly submitted to the sentence that was past upon her; whereas it had been observed, before this circumstance, that she was exceedingly bold in her denial of the facts alledged by the witnesses; made many pertinent observations on the evidence, and seemed under no kind of confusion or disorder. But whatever it pleased God to repre-

sent to her mind at that time, the consequence, as many must remember at this day, was as I have here related it ; and all who were present were struck with amazement and horror.

EXAMPLE XXXII.

In the late instance of miss Jefferies, may certainly be seen the secret hand of providence in bringing her to justice. 'Tis well known, that, some time before the Murder of Mr. Jefferies, Swan, who also suffered for it, and Matthews the evidence, were in London ; and, at a publick house, engaged in a riotous quarrel with some of their drunken companions. One of them challenging a fellow to fight, stripp'd off his cloaths, and gave his coat to a man to hold for him, 'till the battle should be decided, when out of his coat pocket dropp'd a brace of pistols. On this he was taken up, on suspicion of being a highwayman, and, to procure his liberty, miss Jefferies herself appear'd, and declared that some jewels which were found on him were hers, and that she sent them by him to be pawn'd, and that the pistols were her uncle's, which she too had ordered him to get clean'd. This, for the present, got the man off ; but when the Murder was committed, and with one of those very pistols, Swan or Matthews, or both, were too strongly pointed out not to come under great suspicion of having a hand in the Murder. Yet still miss Jefferies, being of that sex of which nothing but gentleness should be presumed, being neice to the murder'd man, and having been bred up under

der his care, could never have been suspected of being either a principal, or an accessory, in a crime so horrid and repugnant to every breast not divested of humanity, had she not, by the accident before-mentioned, so far departed from her character, as publickly to appear in vindication of a man, who now might pretty strongly be presumed to be a Murderer, and who was then (most likely with her knowledge) preparing the pistols for the cruel purpose to which they were applied. May it not, therefore, be said, that the drunken quarrel in London was the clue by which this Murder was unravell'd? It was certainly by that means that miss Jeffries was suspected of having, by the Murder of her uncle, taken out of the hands of God the punishment of a man, who, it must be confess'd, (if her own account of the Murder be true) was very highly culpable. Yet, *vengeance is mine*, saith the Lord; and so it manifestly appears in this instance.

E X A M P L E XXXIII.

In miss Mary Blandy is seen, the strong infatuation which often attends those who commit Murder, and which seldom fails of leading them to justice.

As this unhappy lady is acknowledged to have had an exceeding good understanding, and great quickness of parts and invention, what but infatuation could make her go on in that horrid fact in poisoning her father, in so public and barefac'd a manner? For, according to the evidence of several witnesses, she had frequently

quently uttered speeches very unbecoming in a daughter, and such as must give but too just cause for suspicion : and her repeated doses to her father made even him to suspect that she intended to poison him, as appeared also from what he said to her ; yet his affection for this unhappy girl was so great, that he could not force himself into a belief of her intentions strong enough to prevent them.

What, but the same infatuation, could have prevented her from making use of the money, and things of value in her hands, for her escape ? And this she might easily have effected, when she walked to Henley, had she gone on in a post-chaise to London, instead of returning back to her father's house, which she must know, from what had before passed, would lead to her being taken up, and tried ; and that she had little reason, from her first unguarded manner of proceeding, to hope for an acquittal at her trial.

And now, my good countrymen, let me seriously exhort you, to weigh well with yourselves the following considerations, which must, I think, sufficiently deter you from this most deadly crime : A crime which, though perhaps not considered by law as the highest, is, in truth and in fact, the blackest sin which can contaminate the hands, or pollute the soul of man.

First, this is the greatest injury which one human being can do to another.

Secondly, it is always irreparable. There is scarce any other mischief which we can bring on our neighbour, but it will be afterwards in

our

our power to undo again. If by force or fraud we take away the property of another, it will be in our power to restore them ; but here no future penitence will avail. Here can be no restitution ; no reparation !

Nor is the injury done solely to the murdered person. It often involves a whole family in its consequences. A disconsolate widow, a number of distressed, wretched orphans are left to deplore the loss of a husband and a father ; a parent is deprived of a beloved wife or child, a loss sometimes more bitter than would have been that of their own lives.

Besides the violently robbing a man of his life, and of all the blessings and enjoyments of it ; there is one consideration of so dreadful a nature, that the bare hint of it is sufficient to chill every heart with horror. We know not in what state of mind we find the person whom we destroy ; nor with what load of fresh contracted unrepented guilt, we send him to his final account. We surprize the unhappy wretch unawares, preparing himself perhaps for that repentance which might have obtained his pardon, and by preventing which, we may be guilty of destroying both his body and soul.

It is no wonder, that a crime in itself so execrable, in its consequence so dreadful, should be stamped with every mark of human abhorrence and divine vengeance.

The laws of every civilized people, punish it with death ; in many countries the most exquisite torments are inflicted on a Murderer ; nay, even in this, where tortures are held in a just abhorrence, and where punishments are
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in so eminent a manner mild and gentle ; the law is not barely satisfied with taking away the Murderer's life ; he is denied even the burial of a christian ; and his body is exposed a prey to the ravenous birds of the air. His infamy is preserved as long as nature will admit, a gibbet exposes him as a terrible example to others, and he becomes the monument of his own shame, and of that of all his relations.

In other crimes, it is usual for the criminal to find protection, and the sufferer to be regarded with pity by the tender-hearted ; but in murder there is scarce a single person so profligate and abandoned, as to afford the fugitive a refuge. Every man is ready to discover and yield him up, to pursue and to take him ; every man is desirous to bring him to justice, views him with detestation when in chains ; and sees him on the gallows with pleasure.

In robbery, theft, and such like transgressions, an offender sometimes remains many years in impunity ; for on such occasions, he hath scarce any person, unless those who are immediately injured, or the officers of justice themselves, to apprehend and avoid ; but with murder, all mankind are alarmed. All the human passions are roused against him ; and it presently becomes a common cause to bring him to justice. Hence it very rarely happens that this criminal long escapes the punishment which is his due. Never, indeed, unless he exchanges it for what is, perhaps, much worse, to linger out a miserable life with the loss of country, friends, fortune, and fame ; to be shunned, despised, detested, and cursed by all mankind.

Nor

Nor is this wretch, in all probability, a greater object of horror to others, than he is to himself. If his conscience be not seared, as it were with a hot iron, if his heart be not shut to all the compunctions of remorse and of shame, his own mind is his worst tormentor ; and the horrors which attend all his reflections appear more dreadful, when he casts his eyes behind him, than even the sight of his pursuers would be.

And, if he casts his eyes forwards, what comfort can even hope afford him ? That very justice from which he hath so eagerly run, seems often the only friend to whose arms he can fly. This, many of those Murderers who have been brought at last, tho' late, to their deserved punishment, have honestly confessed ; have owned that the day of their execution was much the happiest which they had experienced since the day of their guilt.

And this must surely be, in general, the case, had we any certain assurance that our punishment for so enormous, so execrable a sin, was to end in this world ; but, alas ! how just reason have we to apprehend that this will not be the case. In every other crime the offender who hath paid the price of his life, may flatter himself that he hath fully expiated his offence : but, in Murder, it is far otherwise ; and that, especially, from the last causes which I have assigned above, where I have endeavoured to set forth the extreme heinousness of this crime.

Here, then, is a thought which must shake the firmest mind ; and make the boldest heart to tremble. *Fear not him, saith our Saviour,*
who

who can kill the body; but fear him who can destroy both body and soul.

What are the terrors of earthly judgment, compared to this tremendous tribunal? Great courage may, perhaps, bear up a bad mind (for it is sometimes the property of such) against the most severe sentence which can be pronounced by the mouth of a human judge; but where is the fortitude which can look an offended Almighty in the face? Who can bear the dreadful thought of being confronted with the spirit of one whom we have murdered, in the presence of all the Host of Heaven, and to have justice demanded against our guilty soul, before that most awful judgment-seat, where there is infinite justice, as well as infinite power? A most dreadful situation indeed! from which may God, of his infinite mercy, deliver us all.

F I N I S.

